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TAGS: [PREL](#) [KPKO](#) [UNSC](#) [MASS](#) [EG](#) [SU](#)
SUBJECT: DARFUR: CAIRO-BASED SLM/A-UNION FRONT OUTLINES ITS
GOALS

REF: KHARTOUM 960

Classified by Counselor for Economic and Political Affairs
Catherine Hill-Herndon for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

11. (C) Summary: On July 5, Cairo-based Youssef Hassan Youssef Abdullah, leader of the Sudanese Liberation Movement/Army - Union Front (SLM/A-UF), outlined his goal to reunify the factions of the former SLM/A into a single face in peace negotiations with the Sudanese government. His new group's first priority is to hold a "union conference" of all factions of the original SLM/A, and perhaps other Darfur rebels and civil society leaders. Youssef prefers new peace negotiations, but starting from the Darfur Peace Agreement (DPA) "with adjustments" could work if all the rebel groups agree. The SLM/A-UF claims to support a UN peacekeeping force for Darfur and UN/AU leadership of the reconciliation process. Youssef sought USG support for his group's conference and its military and logistical activities, complaining that Libya and Chad were no longer assisting. End summary.

SLM/A-UF Aims for SLM/A Unity

12. (C) On July 5, poloff had an introductory meeting with Cairo-based Youssef Hassan Youssef Abdullah, leader of the Sudanese Liberation Movement/Army - Union Front (SLM/A-UF). Youssef was accompanied by Mohamed Abdullah Abdul Khaleq, Coordinator of the High Command Council, and Zobeir Abdul Haqq Mohamed, Political Affairs Officer.

13. (C) Youssef outlined the group's goal of unifying all the splinter factions of the SLM/A. He said he had been a member of the SLM/A and followed Abdulwahid Nour in his split from Minni Minawi, but that after Nour's "failure in leadership" allowed more groups to split off, Youssef himself left to form the new SLM/A-UF. The group's goal, he said, is to reconstitute the SLM/A with as much of its original membership as possible. Youssef, previously in Asmara in the SLM/A political office, is now based in Cairo. The SLM/A-UF also has offices in Paris, London, Saudia Arabia, and Kuwait, and Youssef claims to command the allegiance of 1500 to 2000 "fighters" across Darfur.

SLM/A-UF Wants a "Union Conference"

14. (C) The SLM/A-UF's first priority is to hold a "union conference," preferably in Darfur, and Youssef is in contact with various Darfur rebel factions. Ideally, said Youssef, the leaders of each group would form a new leadership council, which would then elect a new leader ("even Abdulwahid Nour if that's what people want"). Youssef said his group is also in touch with Minni Minawi, and hopes that Minawi will either withdraw from the GOS or, barring that, at

least support the reunified SLM/A from within the GOS. Youssef hoped that such a "union conference" could also include Darfurians not originally affiliated with the SLM/A, including the Justice and Equality Movement (JEM) and Darfur civil society leaders.

¶15. (C) Once unified, Youssef prefers to start peace negotiations from scratch, but when pressed allowed that the Darfur Peace Agreement (DPA), "with adjustments," could be a starting point. A final negotiating position would have to be worked out by all the rebel groups, he said.

SLM/A-UF Supports UN Peacekeeping

¶16. (C) Youssef supports deploying UN peacekeepers in Darfur, and thanked the USG for encouraging the force and for "UN decisions against the GOS." Asked about UN/AU-led reconciliation for Darfur and the aborted SPLM/A conference (reftel), Youssef said that the SLM/A-UF itself supported UN/AU leadership and had no objection to the SPLM initiative, but that since other rebels groups had rejected it "we have to stand together."

SLM/A-U Seeks Support, Funding, Military Assistance

¶17. (C) Poloff restated USG commitment to the UN/AU-led process in response to Youssef's requests for USG support to the SLM/A-UF conference. In addition, Youssef asked for monetary or military assistance for his troops (which could be "top secret" if necessary) and money and training to

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"build capacity" for his followers so they would have the skills to participate in the GOS. He additionally "might need help" to travel to the U.S. to promote his cause, and to bring some members of his group out from inside Darfur to "tell the U.S. what's really going on there."

¶18. (C) Youssef said that he has requested continued assistance from the Libyans and Chadians but that no such assistance was yet forthcoming. For this reason, he did not yet have the means to return to Darfur. Eritrea, on the other hand, "would always help." Thus, Youssef is planning to return to Asmara sometime in August.

Comment

¶19. (C) Youssef emphasized the SLM/A-UF's commitment to peace, separation of religion and state, democracy, and a fair resolution to the Darfur crisis. However, he was clearly interested in USG monetary and military assistance.
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